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SUBJECT: NGO RE-REGISTRATION UPDATE: BACK TO WORK IN THE
NORTH CAUCASUS

REF: MOSCOW 12784 AND PREVIOUS

1. (SBU) The Federal Registration Service (FRS) has re-registered 192 foreign NGOs as of December 22, including all of those providing aid in the North Caucasus. According to UN sources, the re-registration of International Rescue Committee (IRC) and World Vision, along with the French NGO Action Contre la Faim (ACF), completed the re-registration of all those aid agencies working in the North Caucasus. According to our contacts, Ella Pamfilova, chair of the Presidential Commission on Human Rights and Development of Civil Society Institutions, recently raised the status of registrations for NGOs working in the North Caucasus with FRS, asking that they be re-registered as soon as possible.

2. (SBU) Aid representatives told us that assistance programs suspended while awaiting re-registration will resume in full. World Vision Country Director Siobhan Kimmerle told us that World Vision will resume its operations, which have been suspended since October, by mid-January, following the end of official Russian holidays. IRC and ACF will likely resume work about the same time. (NOTE: The French NGO Medicines du Monde is re-registered but is awaiting clarification on the terms of its re-registration before restarting its activities. END NOTE.)

3. (U) Of the 29 NGOs USAID has tracked, 25 have now been re-registered. In addition to IRC and World Vision, Doctors of the World and MiraMed were registered during the past week, leaving ABA/CEELI, Johns Hopkins University, Foundation for Russian-American Economic Cooperation, and Eurasian Foundation awaiting re-registration.

4. (U) To our knowledge, no U.S.-based NGO has been refused following the initial rejection of Doctors of the World, which subsequently submitted a new application and was quickly re-registered. Galina Fokina, the acting chief of FRS' Department for Political Parties and Public, Religious, and Other Organizations, said at a December 22 press conference that FRS was considering applications from 12 other foreign NGOs, had returned 20 applications for revision, and had refused 25 organizations. She did not name those NGOs that have been refused, nor did she clarify whether the refusals included any foreign adoption agencies, but said that some of the refusals might be reconsidered.

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